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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — Radio Service — OFFICE OF INFORMATION

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Housekeepers' Chats — Friday, April 20, 1928

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Chiefly About Children." Program includes menu and recipes from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Bulletin available: "Rompers for Children."

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"What are you talking about tomorrow, Aunt Sammy?" asked my Next-Door Neighbor, as she seated herself in my comfortable kitchen rocker last night.

"Look at that pile of letters," I replied. "Every one of them contains a question about child nutrition. I hope to answer six or seven of them tomorrow."

"Child nutrition," repeated my Neighbor. "Why don't you talk about children's clothes? What children wear is almost as important as what they eat. When I was a child," continued my Neighbor, "I suffered considerably because of my clothes. I was bashful and self-conscious, anyway, and I had to wear made-over clothes which didn't fit very well. I remember one time when I was in the First-Grade A, Aunt Isabel made me a pink dress, and a bright red coat. Fancy that, with my red hair and freckles! No wonder the little heathens in the First-Grade A made life miserable for me. I was called 'Carrot-Top' and 'Bricky' for so many years that I almost forgot I had a good Christian name. Now why didn't Aunt Isabel dress me in browns, and grey-blues, blue-greens, greens, dull orange, and lavender? She should have known that dressing a bashful child in conspicuous colors makes her feel even more ill at ease. Soft, rich, subdued colors are more becoming, and make children feel less conscious of themselves. Is it not so?"

"Quite so," I agreed. "We should keep in mind the disposition or type of child, in selecting colors, and be careful not to subdue his personality by using too bright a color, or too large an amount of it. Dainty, rich colors are becoming on the quiet, demure child, and more daring, clear colors, on the athletic, vivacious youngster. Children's clothes are so easily made, the materials so inexpensive, and colors and designs so charming--it seems to me that every little girl and little boy in the country might have becoming clothes nowadays.

"When I say becoming, I do not mean elaborate, or fussy. A great deal of trimming is out of place on a child's dress. Bindings at neck and wrists, pockets and belts, when cleverly planned, may serve as trimming. Hand or machine stitching, in pretty colors, is appropriate for children's clothes.

"Nowadays more and more children are being taught to take care of their own garments. I know a little girl who has a closet, especially arranged for her clothes, with a low shelf for shoes, small hangers for small dresses, and hooks placed low enough that she can reach them. A wall bag, with numerous pockets, takes care of bedroom slippers, mittens, and so forth. The lower drawer in a family chest is the exclusive property of this little girl. The drawer is partitioned off into three spaces, making room for underwear, stockings, handkerchiefs, and so on. With a place for everything, it's easy for her to keep everything in its place.

"Dear me! I exclaimed, suddenly. "Here I am, talking about clothes, when I'm supposed to be answering the questions in those letters. Let's go over them, together, and get them ready for broadcasting tomorrow."

Which we did, and here are the answers:

Question Number One: "What foods would you suggest for anemic children?" Egg yolk, unusually rich in iron, is very valuable in cases of anemia. Other valuable sources of iron are prunes, raisins, orange juice, and green vegetables, especially spinach. Liver has been shown to be especially suitable for an anemic condition.

Second question: "Does milk contain minerals?" It certainly does. It contains the one mineral in which American diets seem to be rather low. That mineral is calcium. Calcium is one of the chief constituents of bones and teeth.

Third question: "Is it all right to serve sugar, on a child's breakfast cereal?" Cooked cereals, and ready-to-eat cereals, should be served with very little, if any, sugar. If the cereal is heavily sweetened, a child is likely to eat so much that he neglects other, and much-needed foods. If carefully salted, cooked cereals are quite likely to satisfy the taste of a hungry youngster, without the addition of sugar.

Fourth question: "What do you think of serving rather rich foods, just occasionally, at children's parties?" I think it is rather a bad practice. Refreshments for children should not include foods which are rich, or highly seasoned. If the party refreshments can be served at a regular meal-time, so much the better, for there will be less danger of over-eating. A good bill-of-fare for a children's party includes cocoa, or some other milk drink; fruit; sandwiches; ice cream or a gelatin dessert; plain, frosted cake; and simple candies.

Fifth question: "Will you please repeat the six different kinds of foods, which should be included in the daily diet of a growing child?"

First, milk; second, eggs, or a little meat, or fish; third, fruit; fourth, whole-grain cereal foods, or whole-wheat bread, or potatoes; fifth, some vegetable besides potatoes; and sixth, a little butter or cream, in every meal.

Last question: "Do you have any free bulletins on feeding children?" Yes, there are a number of free bulletins on food for children. If you will tell me the ages of your children, I'll be glad to send you the bulletins.

There are two very good items on the menu today--Cheese Custard and Fruit Gelatin. The entire menu includes Cheese Custard; Buttered Peas; Fried Potatoes; and Fruit Gelatin.

Six ingredients, for Cheese Custard:

3 cups milk
1½ cups sharp-flavored cheese, cut into thin shavings
3/4 teaspoon salt
3 eggs
1 tablespoon flour, and
5 drops tabasco

The six ingredients again, for Cheese Custard: (Repeat)

Beat the eggs lightly. Heat the milk in a double boiler, reserving 1/2 cup of the cold milk to mix with the flour. Stir this flour and milk mixture into the hot milk and add the cheese and salt. Stir until the cheese has melted. Pour this mixture into the beaten eggs and add the tabasco. Fill greased cups with the custard, place in a pan surrounded by water, and bake in a moderate oven until set in the center of the cup when tested with the point of a knife. Serve hot in the cups.

Twelve ingredients, for Fruit Gelatin. That's a long list, but the gelatin is worth it. Twelve ingredients, for Fruit Gelatin:

2-1/2 tablespoons granulated gelatin
1/2 cup cold water
1 cup boiling water
3/4 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup peach juice
1 cup pineapple juice
Juice of 4 lemons
Juice of 1 orange
2 cups sliced canned peaches
4 slices canned pineapple, and
2 bananas, scraped and sliced

Twelve ingredients, for Fruit Gelatin, and I'd better repeat them:(Repeat)

Soak the gelatin in the cold water for 5 minutes, add the boiling water, sugar, and salt, and stir until all are dissolved. When cool, add the fruit juices, place this mixture in a bowl surrounded by ice water, and stir now and then. As it begins to congeal, wet and chill a mold, and put in a thin layer of the gelatin mixture. When this has set, arrange a portion of the sliced fruit in the mold in an attractive design. Cut the remaining fruit into small pieces combine with the rest of the gelatin mixture, and fill into the mold. Place in a cold place for 5 or 6 hours to stiffen. When ready to serve, invert a plate over the mold, and turn it upside down. Insert a knife along one edge of the gelatin, and the molded mixture will slip out easily. Serve with plain or whipped cream.

To repeat the menu: Cheese Custard; Buttered Peas; Fried Potatoes; and Fruit Gelatin.